HMT Limited

2787. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the HMT has issued a notification to appoint new officials though it is targeting to downsize by allowing VRS to its employees;

(b) how many years have since been elapsed to revive the agreement on wages of HMT employees;

(c) whether Government propose to initiate revision of wages of the HMT employees; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SUBODH MOHITE): (a) HMT has issued notification to appoint few management trainees (engineers) and executives. The manpower in the company has come down from over 19 thousand as on 1-4-2000 to less than 11 thousand as on 1-4-2003 by implementation of voluntary retirement scheme (VRS).

(b) The last wage revision agreement with workers had expired on 31st December, 1996.

(c) and (d) The 1997 wage revision could not be implemented in HMT due to company not being able to fulfil the guidelines stipulated by Department of Public Enterprises for wage revision.

Praga Tools Limited

2788. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY : Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state :

(a) whether a representation has been made by the employees of the Praga Tools Limited (PTL), Hyderabad for sanction of working capital and to place orders with it;

(b) whether it is a fact that the employees have not received their salaries since October, 2002; and

(c) the steps Government propose to help them ?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SUBODH MOHITE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The company has not been able to pay salaries to the employees regularly due to insufficient cash generation. With the assistance from the Government the company management has paid full salaries to its employees upto September, 2002. Thereafter the management has made part payment to its employees in the form of *ad-hoc* salary advances.

(c) A number of steps are being taken by the company to revive its functioning namely rationalizing manpower, reenerging marketing strategy, reduction of inventories/debtors and earning through disposal of surplus assets. The Government are extending all possible help in the above efforts of the company including financial assistance for manpower rationalization through implementation of voluntary retirement scheme (VRS). More than Rs. 55 crore financial assistance has been granted to the company for payment of salaries and wages, discharge of statutory dues and implementation of VRS during the last 3 years.

Diversion of Gratuity amount of employees of Bharat Wagon and Engineering Ltd.

2789. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state :

(a) whether funds released by Government for payment of the gratuity amount to 142 employees of the Bharat Wagon and Engineering Limited under VRS (November, 2000 to January, 2001) has been diverted for payment of the other dues;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether only those employees who have gone to the court got the payment alongwith interest@18 per cent and the other employees covered for the payment of gratuity have not got their legal dues; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SUBODH MOHITE) : (a) An amount of Rs.41.43 lakh was diverted to pay the outstanding gratuity of 41 superannuated employees as per Court/statutory authority orders. However, the gratuity